

## JEWISH OBLIGATIONS TO CARE FOR THE HUNGRY YOM KIPPUR 5784

### TEXT #1 – FROM THE TORAH

ויקרא י"ט:טז-י"ז

(ט) וּבְקַצְרְכֶם אֶת־קַצִּיר אֲרֻצְכֶם לֹא תִכְלֶה פֶּאֶת שְׂדֶךְ לַקָּצֵר וּלְקַט קַצִּירְךָ לֹא תִלְקֹט: (י) וּכְרֻמָּה לֹא תִעֲזֹלֵל וּפְרֹט כְּרֻמָּה לֹא תִלְקֹט לְעֹנֵי וְלִגֵּר תַּעֲזֹב אֹתָם אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

### Leviticus 19:9-10

(9) When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap all the way to the edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. (10) You shall not pick your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen fruit of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I am the Eternal your God.

- **Why do you think the commandment is written this way, where we are instructed to “leave food for the poor and the stranger?” Why were we not commanded to simply give food directly to those in need?**
- **How might these commandments apply to our lives today when it comes to how we are instructed to care for those who experience food insecurity?**

## TEXT #2– FROM THE BOOK OF THE PROPHETS, READ ON YOM KIPPUR DAY

### ישעיהו ב"ח:ג'-ז'

(ג) למה צמנו ולא ראית ענינו נפשנו ולא תדע הן ביום צמכם תמצאו חפץ וכל עציביכם תנגשו: (ד) הן לריב ומצה תצומו ולהקות באגרף גשע לא תצומו כיום להשמיע במרום קולכם: (ה) הנה יהיה צום אבחרהו יום ענות אדם נפשו הלקף פאגמן ראשו ושק ואפר יציע הנה תקרא צום ויום רצון ליהנה: (ו) הלא זה צום אבחרהו פתח חרצבות גשע התר אגדות מוטה ושלח רצוצים חפשים וכל מוטה תנתקו: (ז) הלא פרוס לרעב לחמה ועניים מרודים תביא בית כיתראה ערם וכסיתו ומבשרו לא תתעלם:

### Isaiah 58:3-7

(3) “Why, when we fasted, did You not see? When we starved our bodies, did You pay no heed?” Because on your fast day you see to your business and oppress all your laborers! (4) Because you fast in strife and contention, and you strike with a wicked fist! Your fasting today is not such as to make your voice heard on high. (5) Is such the fast I desire, a day for people to starve their bodies? Is it bowing the head like a bulrush and lying in sackcloth and ashes? Do you call that a fast, a day when the Eternal is favorable? (6) No, this is the fast I desire: To unlock shackles of wickedness, and untie the cords of the yoke; to let the oppressed go free; to break off every yoke. (7) It is to share your bread with the hungry, and to take the wretched poor into your home; when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to ignore your own kin.

- **Why do you think our ancestors chose these verses from the Book of Isaiah for us to read on the day of Yom Kippur?**
- **What does this text tell us about what is important to God when it comes to leading a religious life?**

## TEXT #3 – FROM THE TALMUD

**בבא בתרא ט' א:י"ב**

אמר רב אסי שקולה צדקה כנגד כל המצו

### **Bava Batra 9a:12**

Rav Asi says: Providing *tzedakah* for poor and hungry people weighs as heavily as all the other commandments of the Torah combined.

- Do you agree that giving tzedakah to the poor and hungry is as important as all the other commandments in the Torah? Why or why not?
- What does this text tell us about the importance of caring for those who are hungry in the Jewish tradition?
- How does reading this text impact how you feel about providing help for those who are food insecure?

## TEXT #4 – FROM THE TEACHINGS OF MAIMONIDES

משנה תורה, הלכות שביתת יום טוב ו'י"ח

(יח) וְכִשְׁהוּא אוֹכֵל וְשׂוֹתֶה חַיֵּב לְהַאֲכִיל לְגֵר לִיתּוֹם וְלְאַלְמָנָה עִם שְׂאֵר הָעֲנִיִּים הָאֲמֻלָּלִים. אֲבָל מִי שְׂנוּעַל דְּלִתּוֹת תְּצַרוּ וְאוֹכֵל וְשׂוֹתֶה הוּא וּבָנָיו וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וְאִינוּ מְאָכִיל וּמְשַׁקֶּה לְעֲנִיִּים וּלְמָרִי נֶפֶשׁ אֵין זֶה שְׂמֵחַת מִצְוָה אֶלָּא שְׂמֵחַת כְּרֶסוֹ.

### Mishneh Torah, 6:18

While eating and drinking, one must feed the foreigner, the orphan, the widow, and other poor unfortunates. Anyone, however, who locks the doors of their courtyard and eats and drinks along with their families, without giving anything to eat and drink to the poor and the desperate, does not observe a religious celebration but indulges in the celebration of their own stomachs.

- **This text comes from a section of the Mishneh Torah dedicated to explaining how Jewish people are supposed to celebrate holidays. What is Maimonides saying that all of our holiday celebrations should include?**
- **Do you agree that during times of celebration we must remember and care for those who are hungry? Why or why not?**
- **How can you make sure your holiday or life cycle celebrations include caring for those who are hungry?**

## TEXT #5 – FROM THE TEACHINGS OF MAIMONIDES

משנה תורה, הלכות מתנות עניים ז':ו'

עָנִי שָׁאֵין מְכִירִין אוֹתוֹ וְאָמַר רָעֵב אָנִי הֶאֱכִילוּנִי אֵין בּוֹדְקִין אַחֲרָיו שְׂמָא רַמְאֵי הוּא אֶלָּא מְפָרְנְסִין אוֹתוֹ מִיָּד.

### **Mishneh Torah, Gifts to the Poor 7:6**

When a poor person whose identity is unknown says: "I am hungry, provide me with food," we do not investigate whether they are a deceiver. Instead, we provide them with sustenance immediately.

- **What does this text tell us about the importance of caring for those who are hungry in the Jewish tradition?**
- **How does reading this text impact how you feel about providing help to those who might approach you, saying that they are hungry?**